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SUBJECT: CZECH REPUBLIC: OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION PROGRESS

REF: A. STATE 78227

[1](#)B. PRAGUE 310

[1](#)1. (SBU) We delivered reftel points to Deputy Minister Czeslaw Walek of the Ministry of Human Rights and National Minorities and to Deputy Minister and Anti-Extremism Task Force leader Jiri Komorous of the Interior Ministry on July [1](#)29. The Ministry of the Interior deferred its response to the Human Rights Ministry. Deputy Minister Walek said the USG concerns on several issues are on point. He acknowledged that the introduction of "practical" schools, following the European Court of Human Rights decision in 2007 that Roma were disproportionately and unlawfully assigned to "special" schools, had not solved this problem. An Education Ministry study completed in January 2009 made several recommendations for targeted assistance to support the integration of Roma students into mainstream education, and Walek considers this study an important step forward. Walek also said the Human Rights Ministry hopes to submit a housing plan addressing socially excluded localities to the government by September.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Walek said the most worrying extremism cases are the April firebomb attack that seriously burned a two-year-old girl in Vitkov, and last November's conflict between right-wing protesters and police in the Janov housing estate mostly populated by Roma (reftel B). Only one person has been charged in the Janov case, and that person was a Roma, he pointed out. Walek said the Human Rights Ministry is following up on both cases with the Interior and Justice Ministries, but for its own part is focusing on the need to establish ethical and moral standards and have a greater public dialogue. Note: According to August 13 press reports, police have now made 12 arrests in the Vitkov arson attack. The police have not officially confirmed the arrests. End note.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The Chamber of Deputies (lower house) gave final approval to the anti-discrimination law in June 2009 by overriding the President's veto. The Czech Republic was the last European Union country to approve the law. Walek mentioned the law's final approval in his comments.

Thompson-Jones